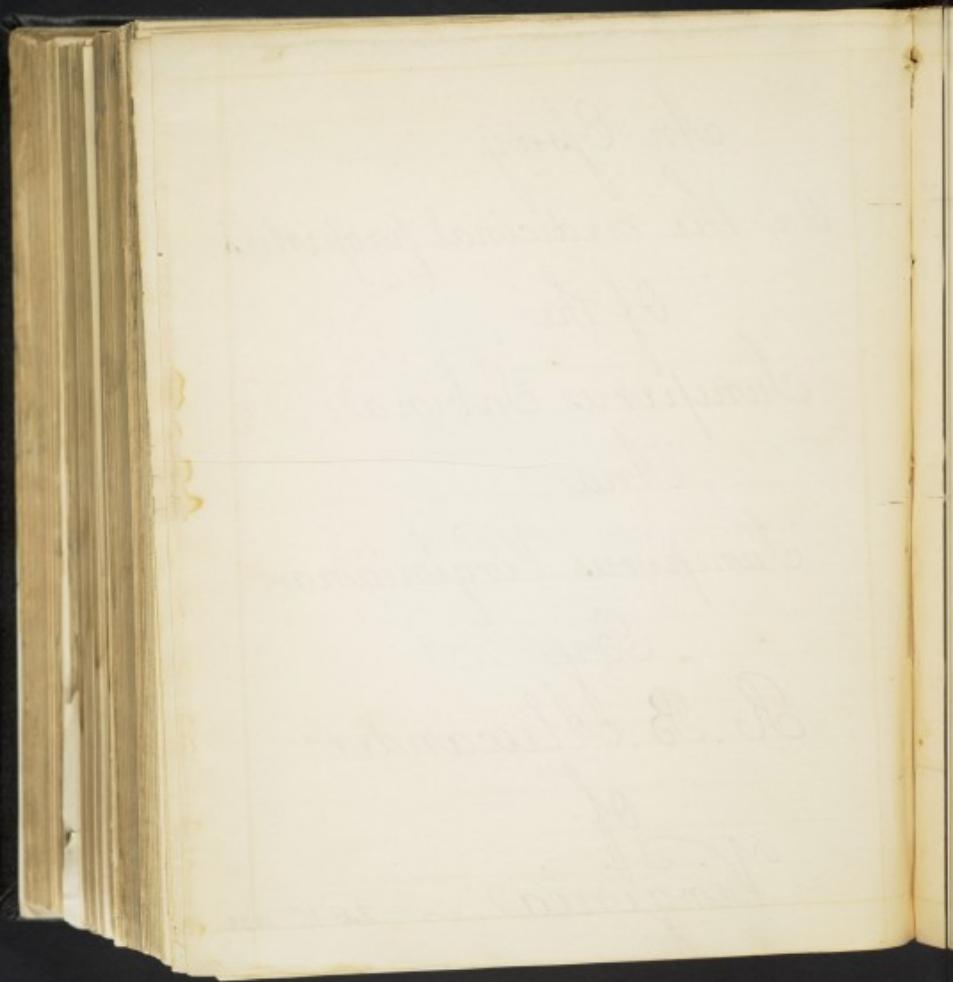


An Essay  
On the medicinal properties  
of the  
*Juniperus Sabina*  
And  
*Juniperus Virginiana*  
By  
R. B. Alexander  
of  
Virginia.

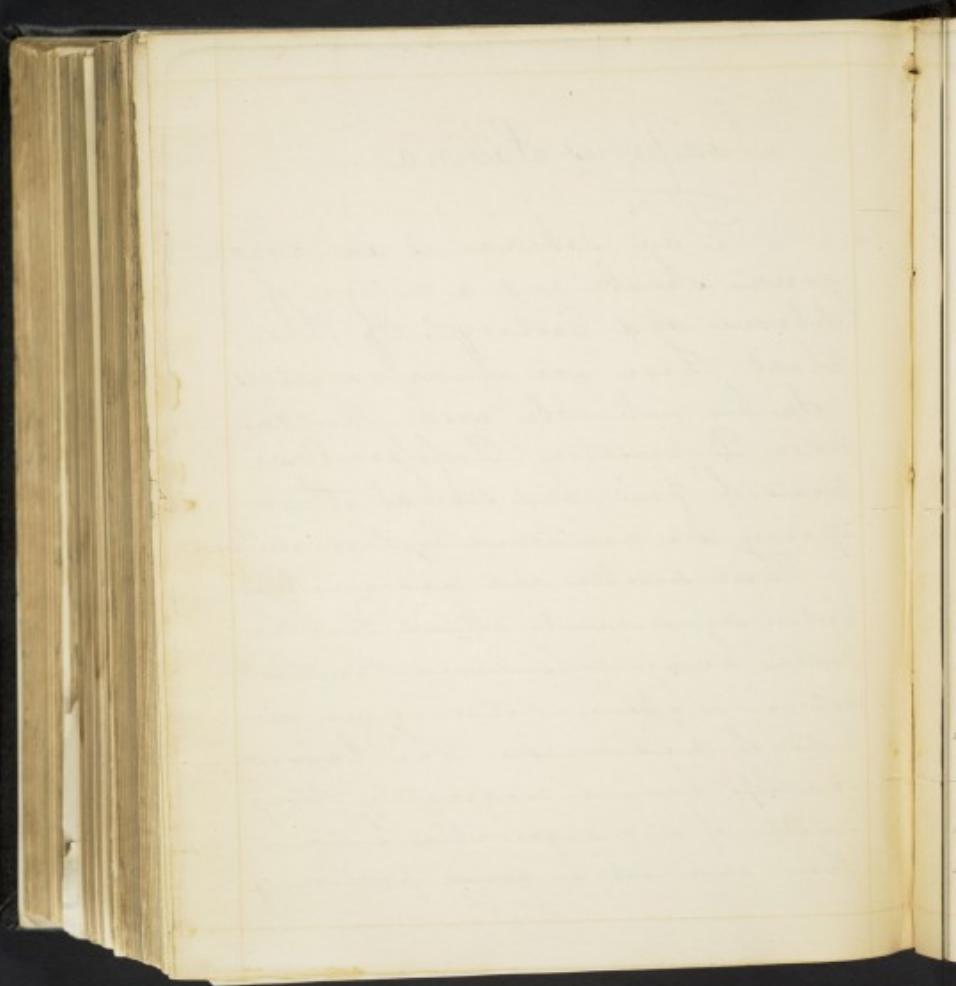
Feb 11<sup>th</sup> 1828.



## Juniperus Sabina

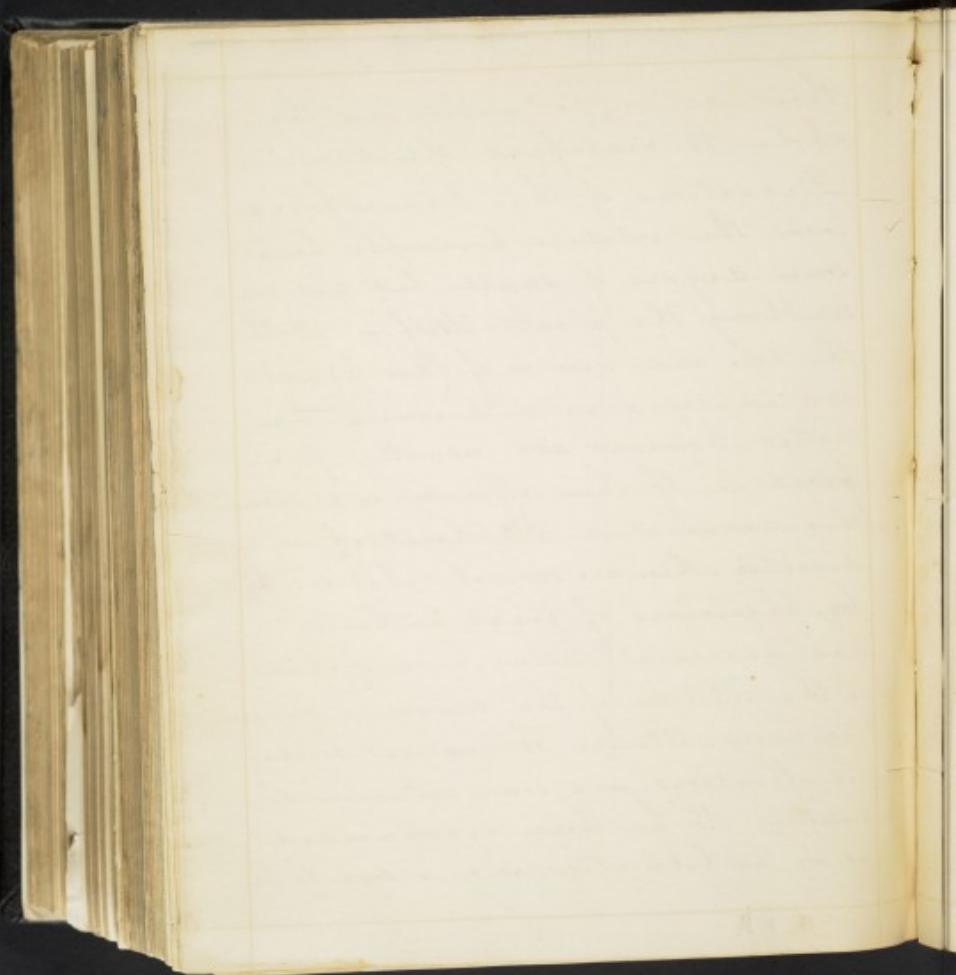
The sabina is an evergreen shrub, and a native of Siberia and Tartary. Of this plant, there are many varieties. In his valuable work, The American Dispensatory, Professor Cox treats of four, and several other species are mentioned by their author.

Their sensible and medicinal properties are so nearly allied that the sabin being considered the most active is alone retained in our lists of medicines. The leaves and tops have a moderately strong smell, of a disagreeable kind; they give out a great portion of



This action <sup>principle</sup> to water, and the  
whole to rectified spirit, is

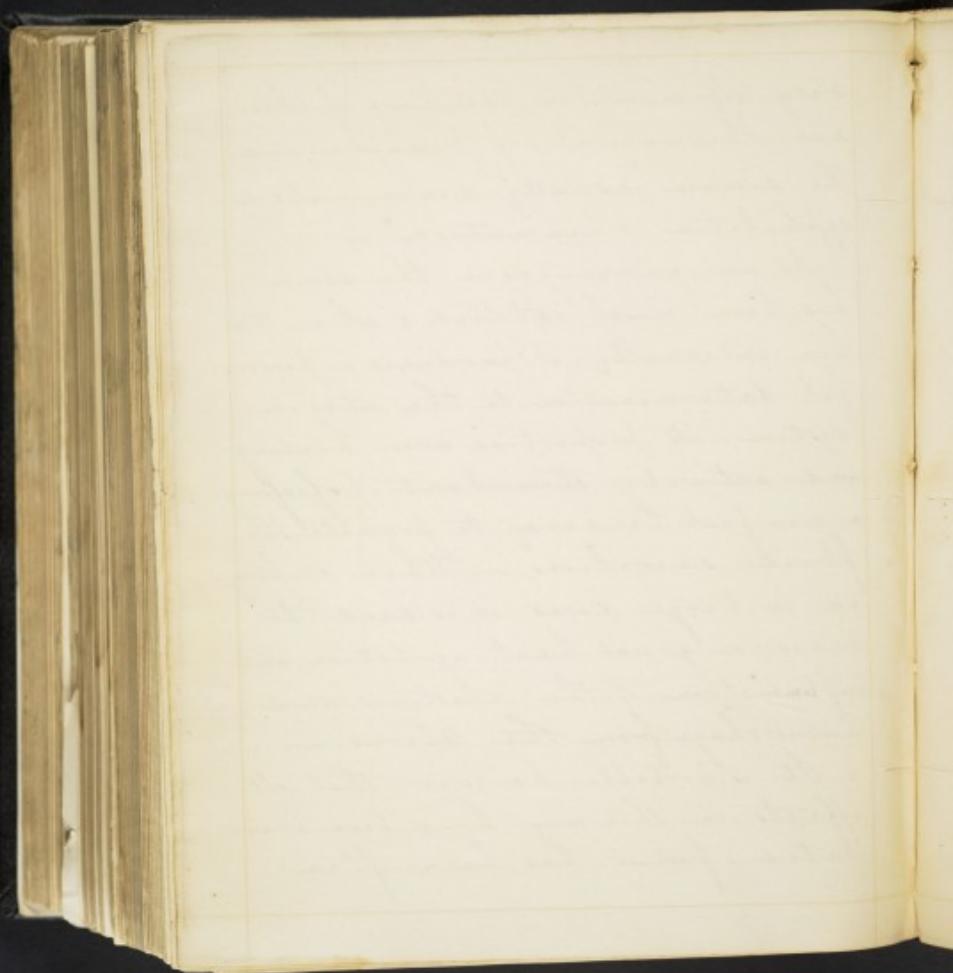
Decoctions of the leaves freed  
from the volatile principle have  
some degree of smell, but not re-  
sembling the plant itself. — Both  
the tops and berries of this plant  
are employed in medicine, the  
latter however are usually pre-  
pared. — Of their efficacy as a stoma-  
chic, carminative, diaphoretick and  
diuretic, there are several relations by  
physicians of great authority;  
and medicinal writers have spoken  
of the utility of the savin, in nephri-  
tic cases, uterine obstructions, scorbu-  
tic affections, and some cutaneous dis-  
eases. It has been recommended  
as an anthelmintic, and is said to be



very efficient in the cure of chronic rheumatism, of podagra, and the disease usually denominated syphilitic rheumatism.

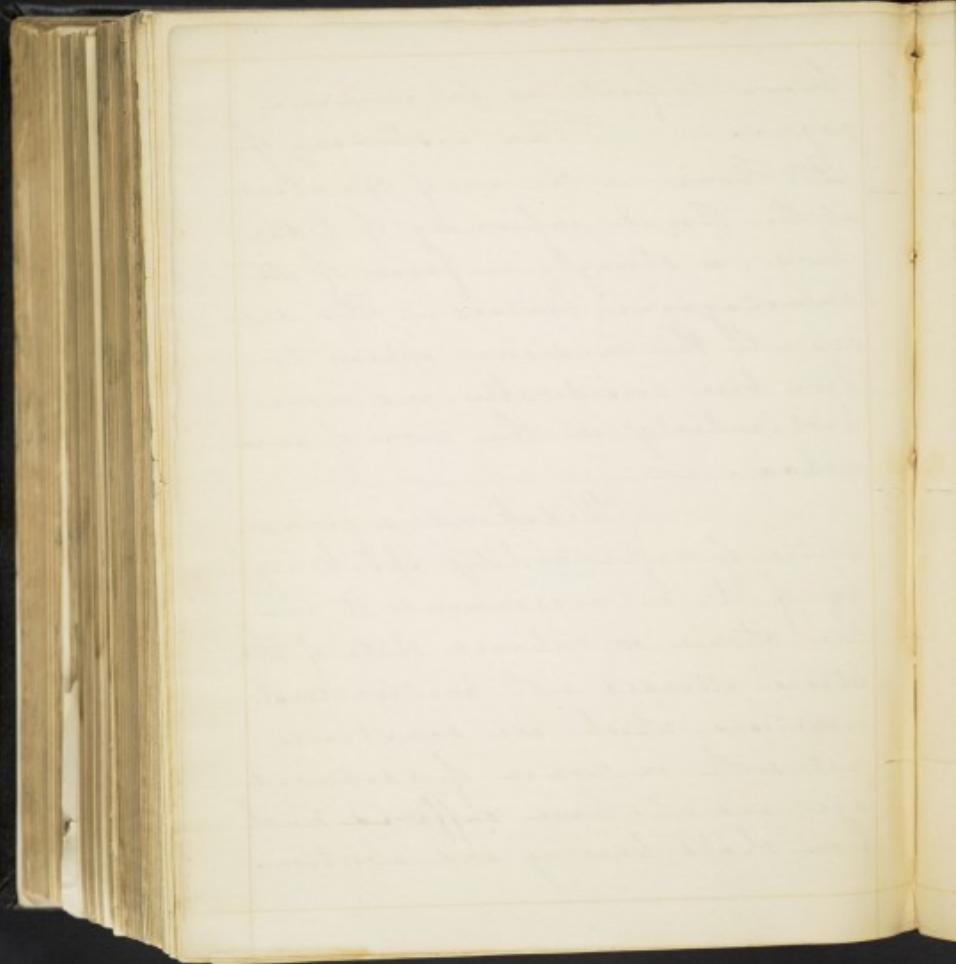
As an emmenagogue, the senna has been much extolled; when taken internally, it produces a powerful determination to the uterine system, its properties are heating and actively stimulant, possessing a manifest tendency to promote the fluid secretions. — When employed in large doses, it is said to occasion great heat, agitation, and inflammation of the intestines, and hemorrhage from the uterus. —

It is probable however, that its effects, in this way have been overrated, for it has been often



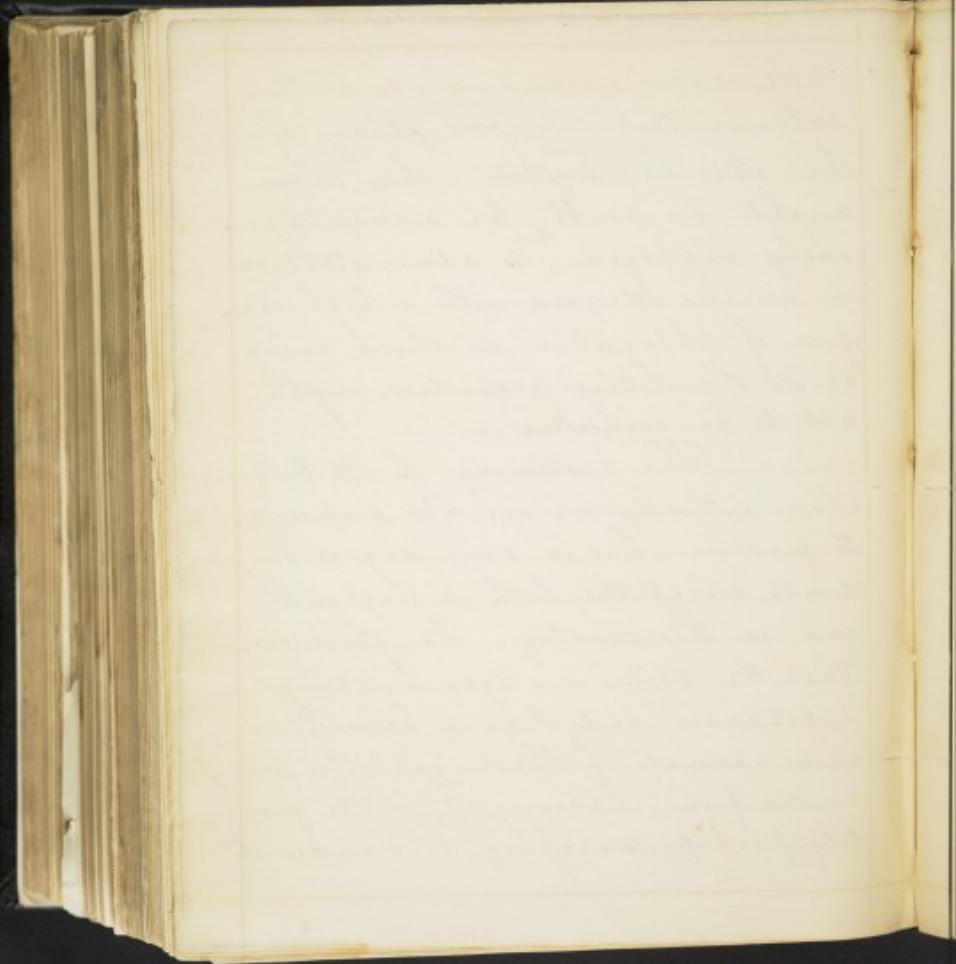
known to fail as an emmenagogue. — The testimony of Dr. Rose in the use of this plant at the Royal infirmary of Edinburgh, is strongly in favor of its emmenagogic virtues. — His success with this medicine appears to have been considerable, and more particularly in the cure of amenorrhœa.

Widkind a German writer of respectability speaks highly of it; he recommends it in the atonic or relaxed state of the uterus, attended with preternatural secretions, which are sometimes met with in women of advanced age, and who have suffered much from child bearing and abortion.



In cases accompanied with extreme torpidity, or atony of the uterine system, the savin might no doubt be advantageously employed, <sup>but</sup> its administration in diseases attended with a high degree of phlogistic diathesis, owing to its stimulating properties, ought not to be countenanced.

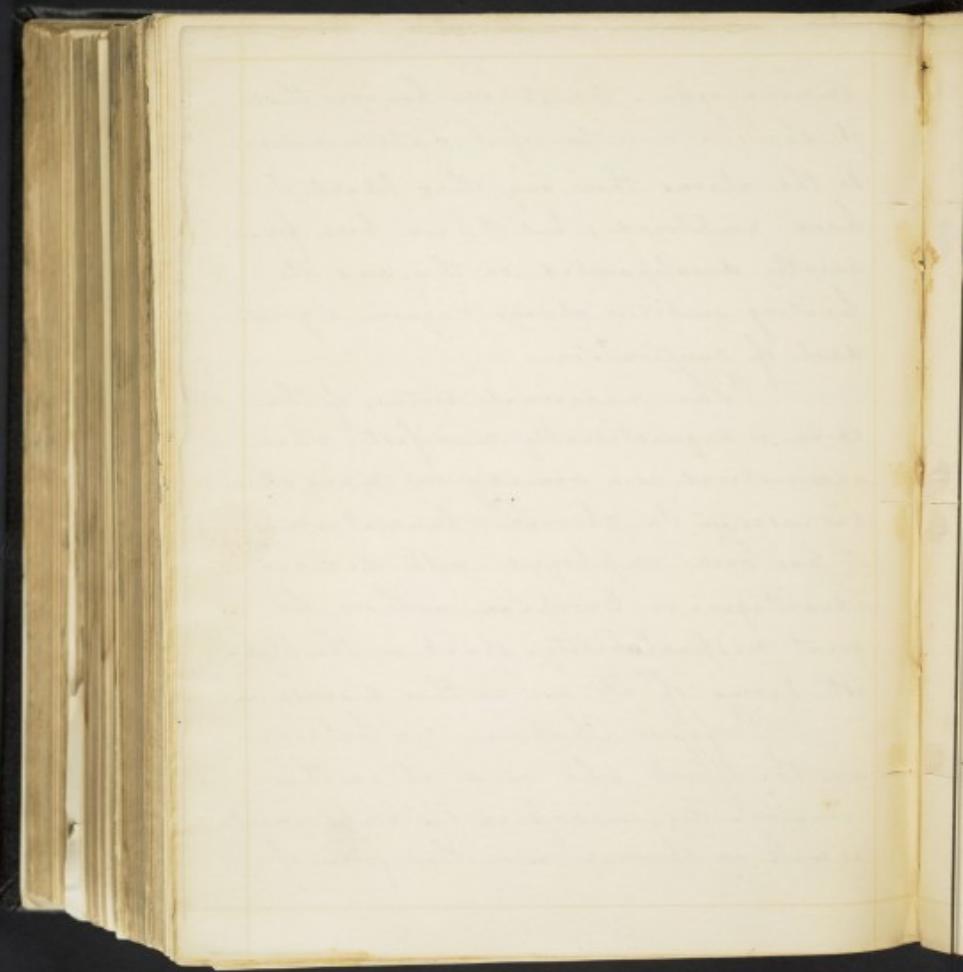
The testimony of Dr Cullen, whose authority we are not disposed to question, has in some degree brought it into disrepute, both in England and in this country. He observes, "that the savin is a very heating substance, and I have been often upon account of these qualities, prevented from employing it in the quantity, perhaps, necessary to render it



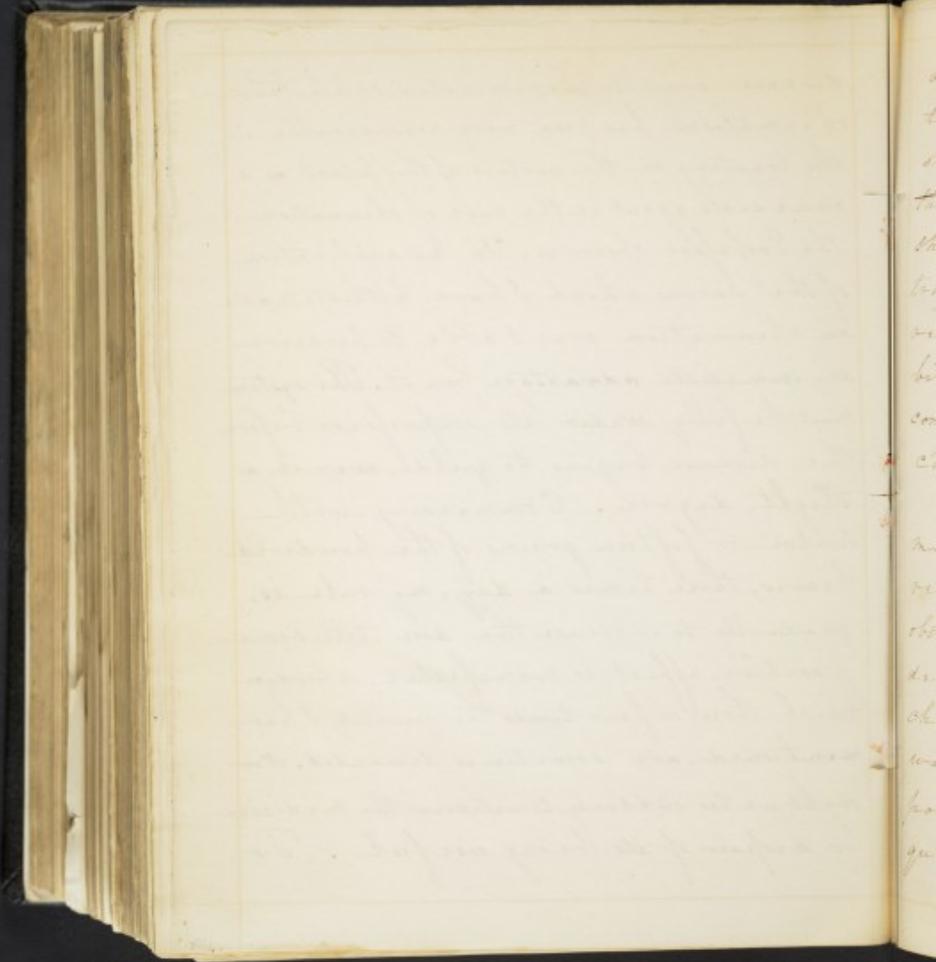
immunagogue. I must own however that it shows a more powerful determination to the uterus than any other plant I have employed; but I have been frequently disappointed in this, and its heating qualities always require a great deal of caution." —

The medicinal virtue of the senna is unquestionably manifest, when administered as a remedy in many other diseases. In chronic rheumatism it has been employed with decided advantage. European authors of great respectability, speak in the highest terms of its use in this disease.

Professor Chapman we believe was the first who used it in this Country. Its success in its employment as well in chronic, as in that form of

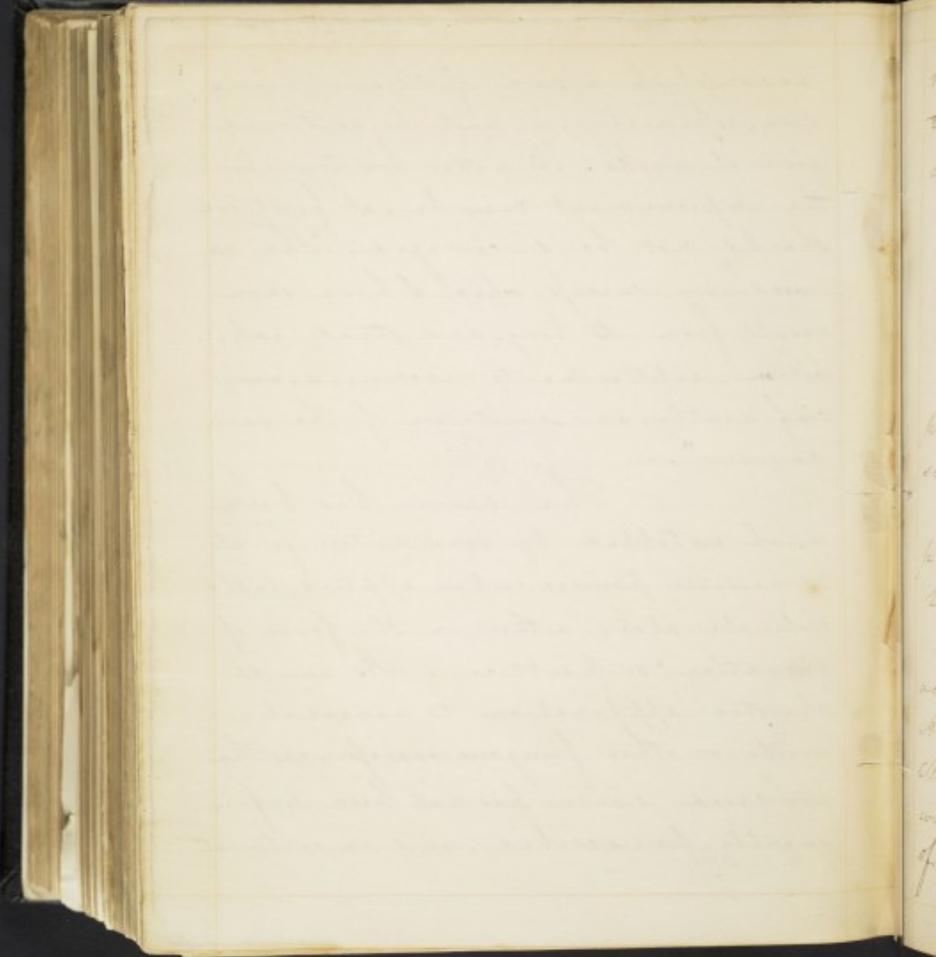


disease usually denominated syphilitic  
rheumatism has been very considerable. —  
In treating on the virtues of this plant as a  
remedial agent in the cure of rheumatism,  
the Professor observes; In no application  
of the Savin which I have hitherto made  
in rheumatism, was I able to perceive  
any immediate advantage from it. The system  
must be fully under its impression before  
the disease begins to yield, even in a  
slight degree. Commencing with  
twelve or fifteen grains of the powdered  
leaves, three times a day, my rule is,  
gradually to increase the dose till some  
positive effect is manifested, to produce  
which, three or four times the quantity I have  
mentioned, are sometimes demanded. Nor  
ought we too suddenly to withdraw the medicine  
in despair of its being useful. To



accomplish a cure of chronic rhuma-  
tism, especially, it must be continued  
several weeks. No matter how trivial  
the improvement may be, at first, we  
should not be discouraged. The ex-  
traordinary success, which I have seen  
result from its long and steady adminis-  
tration, entitles me to recommend, very  
confidently, an imitation of the same  
course".

The sain has been  
much extolled by some writers for its  
remedial powers, when applied to old  
obstinate ulcers, either in the form of  
decocation or poultice. As an ex-  
chaotic application to venereal  
warts, or other fungous excrescences the  
powdered sain has not been unfe-  
quently prescribed, and an ointment



made of it, is one of the best applications, we propose for keeping up a discharge from blistered surfaces.

*Suniperus Virginianus*  
Or red cedar.

Unlike the subject of the preceding article, this species rises into a tree of considerable size.

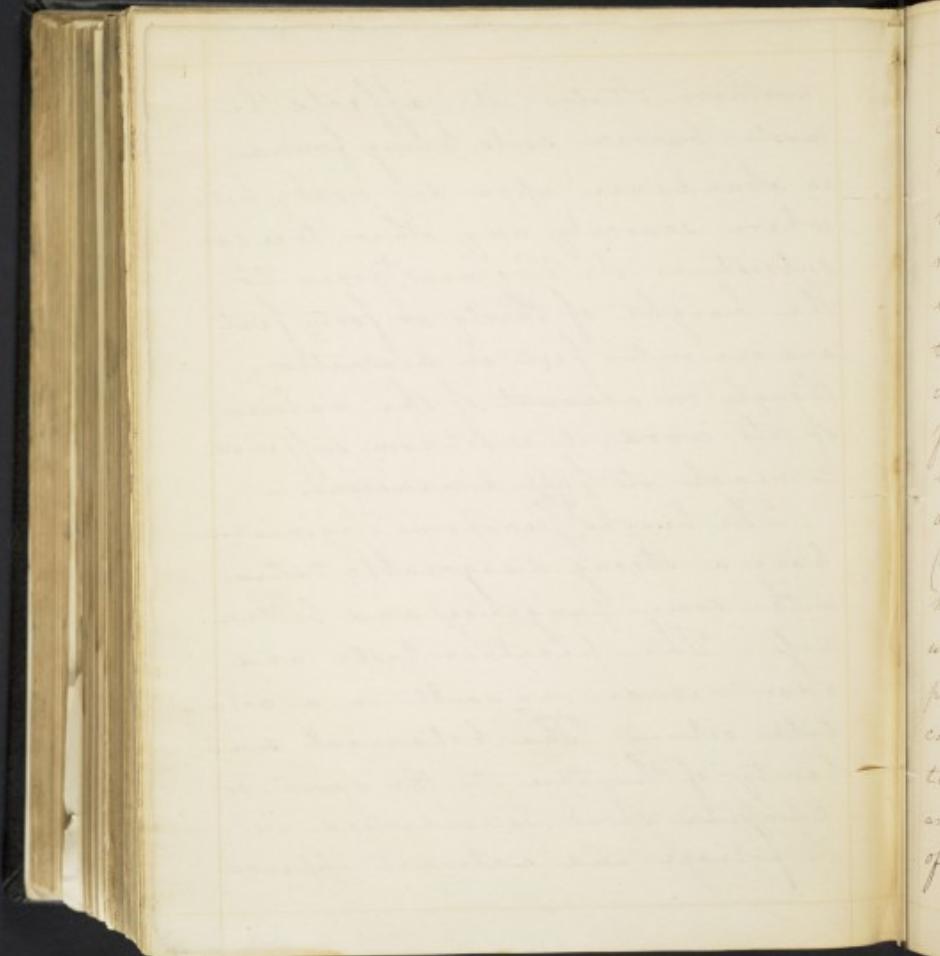
It is the largest of the junipers growing within the original limits of the United States.

It is an evergreen plant, and according to Michaux in his North American Sylva, it is found from Maine and from Lake Champlain without interruption to the cape of Florida. In the middle and

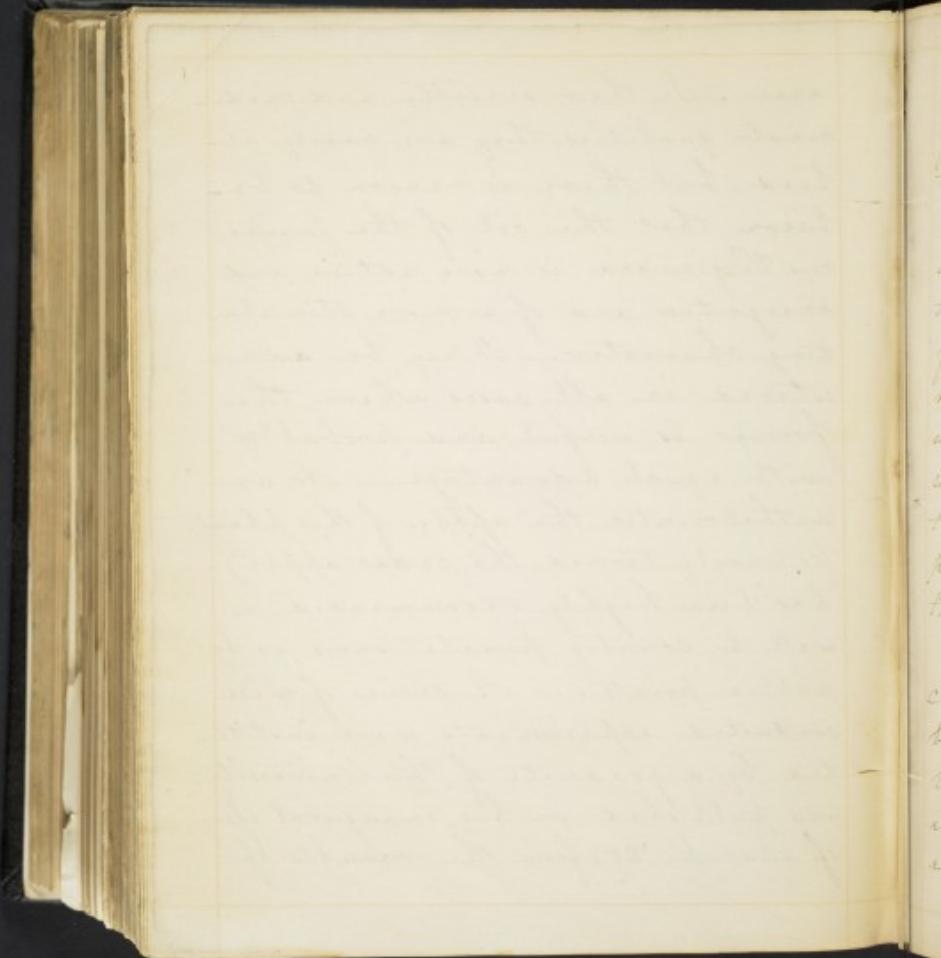


northern States it affects the most barren soils, being found in abundance upon dry rocky hills where scarcely any other tree can subsist. In Virginia, it grows to the height of thirty or forty feet and one or two feet in diameter, though on account of the value of its wood, it is seldom suffered to reach its full dimensions.

The leaves of *Juniperus Virginiana* have a strong disagreeable taste, with some pungency and bitterness. The peculiar taste and odor reside, no doubt in a volatile oil. The botanical similarity of this tree, to the savin, or European shrub, is evidenced in its foliage and external appear-



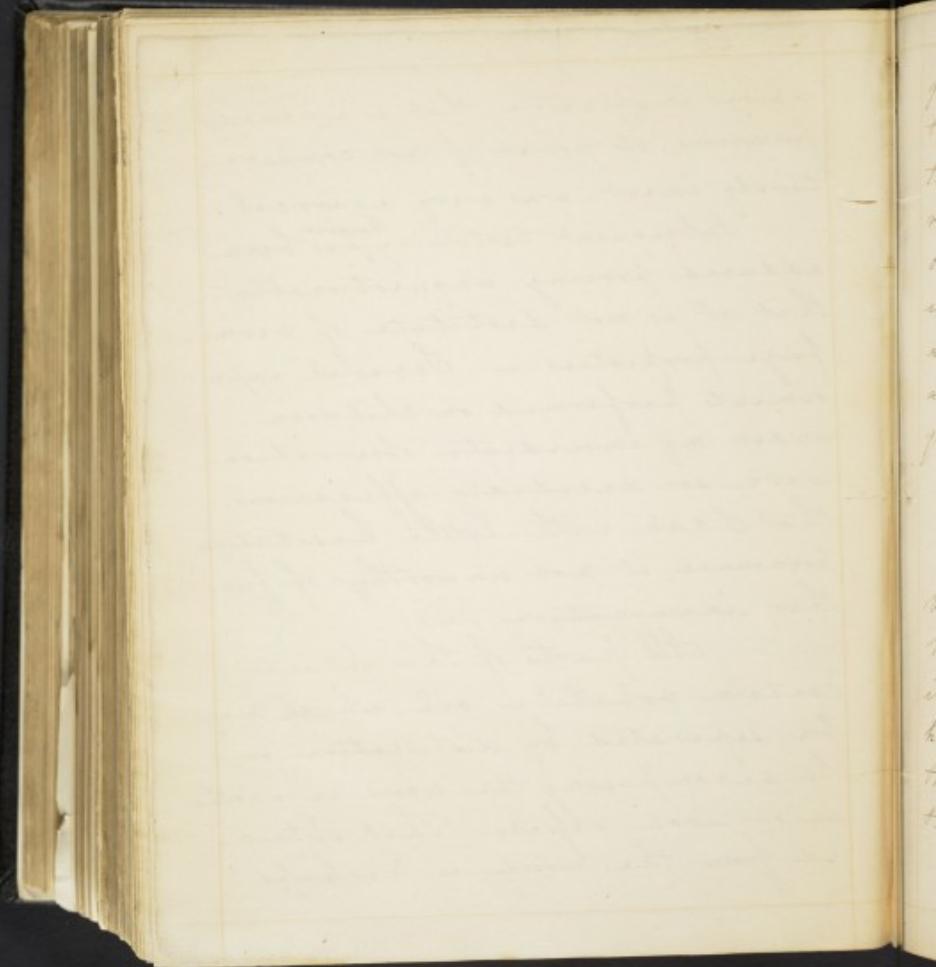
area. In their sensible and medicinal qualities, they are nearly allied, but there is reason to believe that the oil of the Juniperus Virginiana is more active and energetic, and of a more stimulating character. - It may be administered in all cases where the former is useful, and probably with equal advantage. - As an anthelmintic, the apple of this plant (commonly termed the cedar apple) has been highly recommended, as well by country practitioners, as by public prints. A series of were conducted experiments were instituted by a graduate of this University, and published in his inaugural essay of March '27; from the results of



which, it appeared, that as a remedy  
for worms, its power if not compara-  
tively inert, was very equivocal.

Subsequent testimony, <sup>however</sup> has been  
adduced proving unquestionably,  
that it is not destitute of worm-  
fuge properties. Several expe-  
riments performed on children,  
under my immediate observation,  
were so decidedly efficacious,  
that I can with little hesitation  
pronounce it not unworthy of fur-  
ther examination.

All parts of this plant  
contain volatile oil, which may  
be separated by distillation, or  
by decomposing the wood in earth-  
or iron vessels. That obtain-  
ed from the wood is perhaps

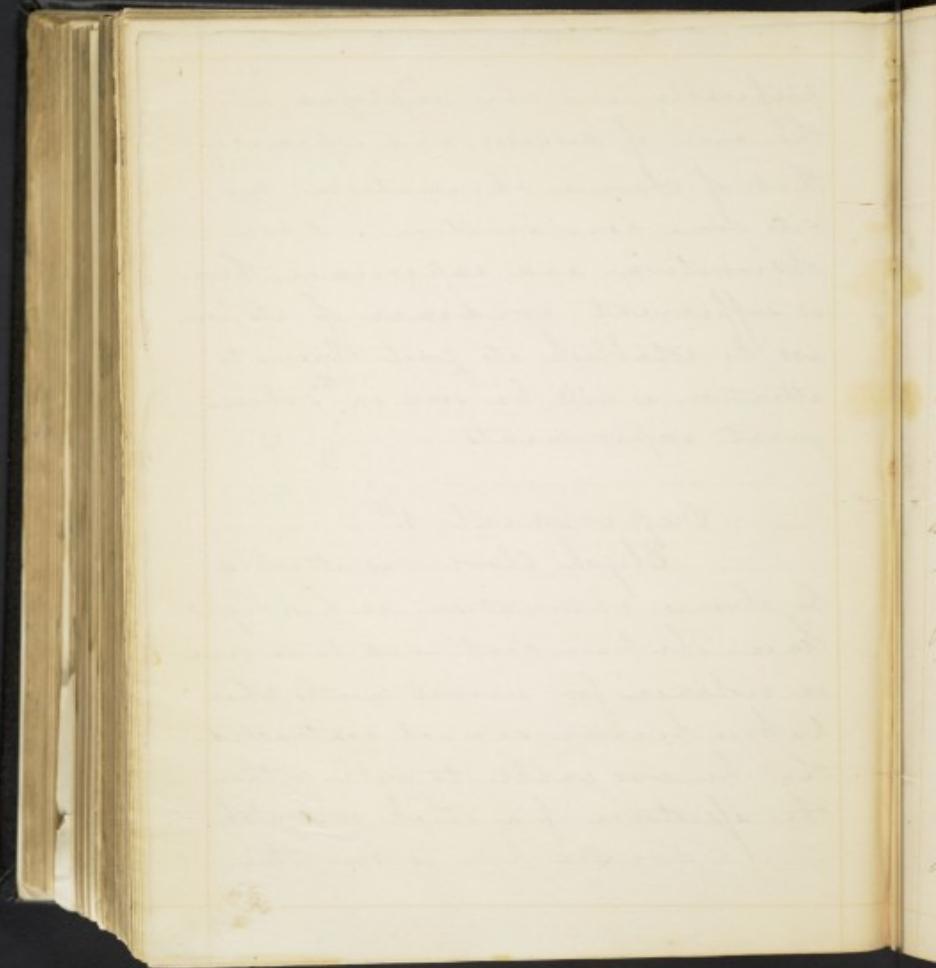


preferable, and when employed in  
the cure of diseases, and especially  
that of chronic rheumatism, war-  
rants some consideration. From  
observation and experience there  
is sufficient evidence of its power  
to establish its just claims to  
attention as will be seen in the subse-  
quent experiments.

#### Experiment 1<sup>st</sup>

Elijah Clowe was attacked  
by chronic rheumatism in his right  
knee. The pain continued to increase  
in violence for several months, when  
his bone became so much contracted  
that he was unable to walk without  
the assistance of a stick or crutch.

I directed him to rub the



part affected for ten or fifteen minutes with spiritual oil of the Juniperus virginiana moderately warmed, to be applied at night on going to bed.

On the next day, he walked with perfect ease to himself and according to his account, the pain left him in an hour after the application of the medicine.

The remedy was continued several succeeding nights, and no symptoms of disease returning, the further employment of it, was deemed unnecessary.

### Experiment 2<sup>o</sup>.

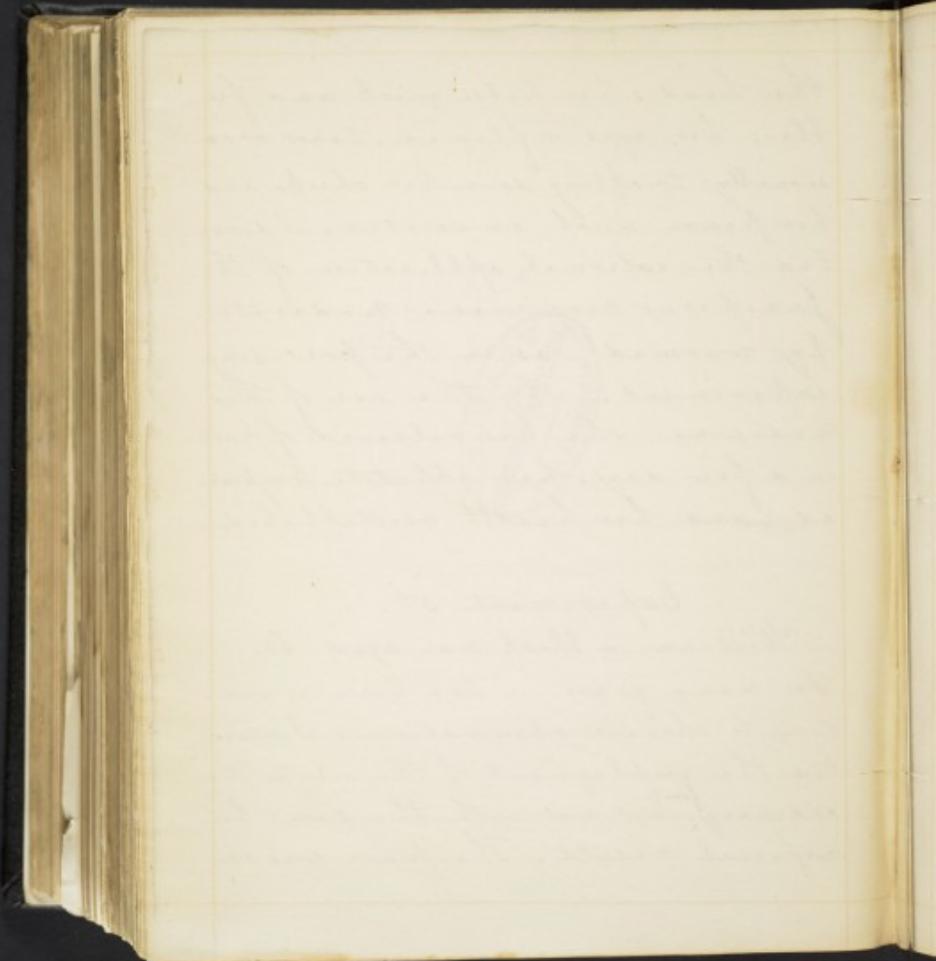
Elizabeth Davis aged 40.  
Case of chronic rheumatism. The disease principally confined to



the head; her pulse quick and feeble; her eyes inflamed, tears occasionally trickling down her cheeks, and her person much emaciated. I directed the external application of the *Juniperus virginiana* moderate-  
ly warmed, as in the preceding experiment. By the use of this medicine, she was relieved of pain in a few days; her appetite improved, and her health re-established.

### Experiment 3<sup>d</sup>.

William, a black man aged 60.  
For many years, he had been a victim to chronic rheumatism. I directed the employment of the oil, in the ordinary <sup>form</sup>, but not with the same beneficial result. The pain was in



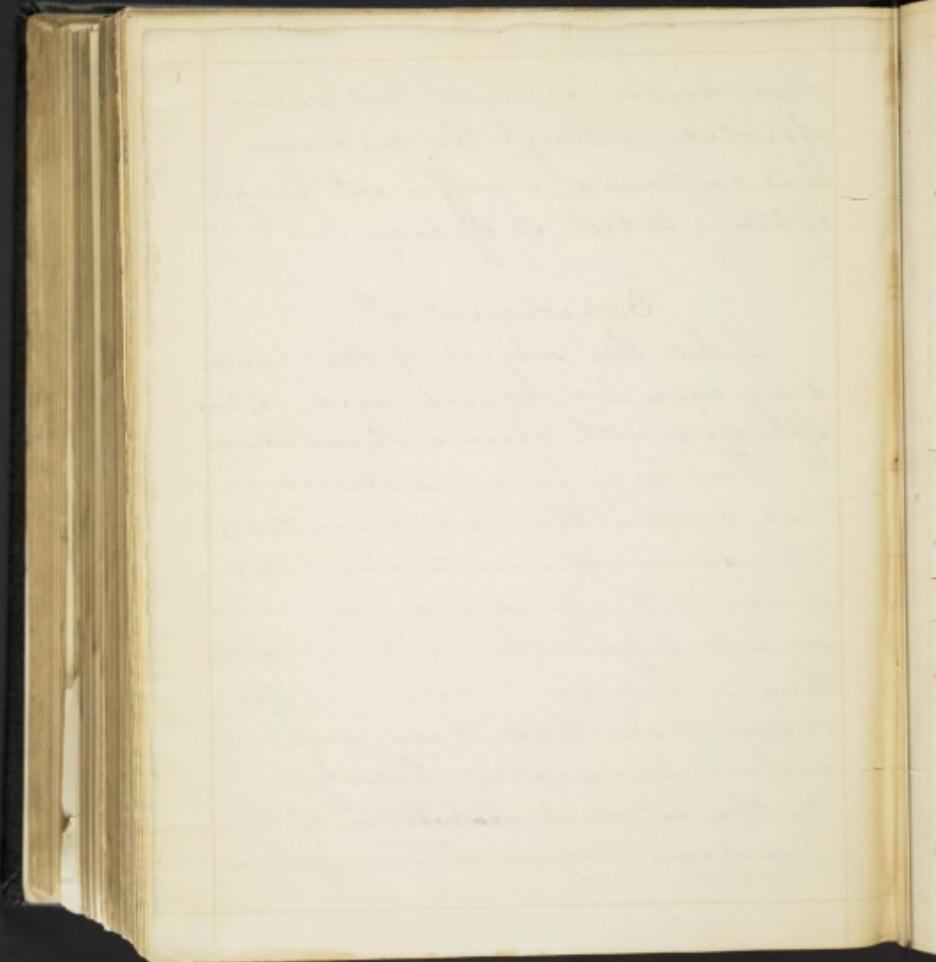
some degree relieved, but no cure affected, although the medicine was continued a sufficient length of time to test its efficacy.

#### Experiment 4<sup>th</sup>.

Like the subject of the preceding case Mrs McLeod aged 45, was afflicted with chronic rheumatism.

From being fat and corpulent, she had become thin and emaciated; the disease appeared to distract its vigor from the hands and feet, so much so, as to deprive her of the use of them. The usual remedies for rheumatism had been employed, without permanent benefit.

By the external exhibition of the Juniperous Virginiana as well as



a dose taken inwardly, she walked  
as on the following day. The use  
of her limbs was perfectly restor-  
ed in a short time by the use of  
the oil.

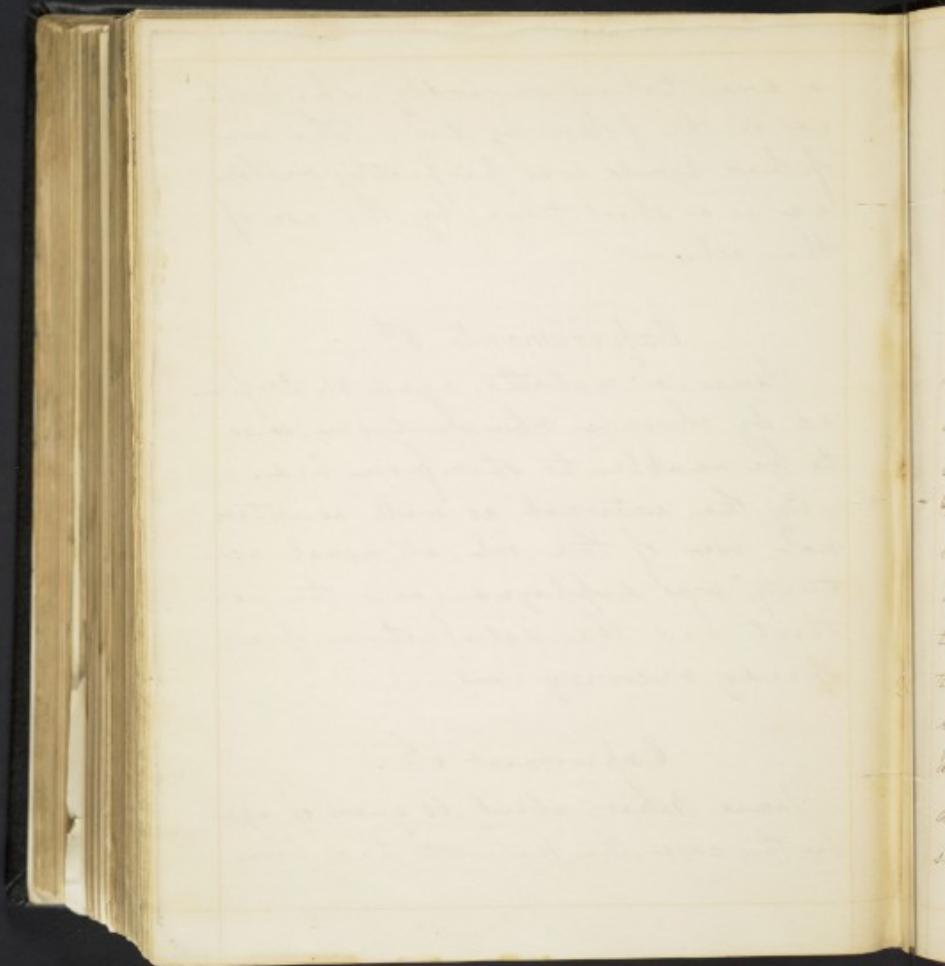
### Experiment 5<sup>th</sup>.

James, a mulatto, aged 50. Confin-  
ed by chronic rheumatism, so as  
to be unable to stir from bed.

By the external as well as inter-  
nal use of the oil, its usual ac-  
tivity was displayed, and the pa-  
tient had the satisfaction of a  
speedy recovery.

### Experiment 6<sup>th</sup>.

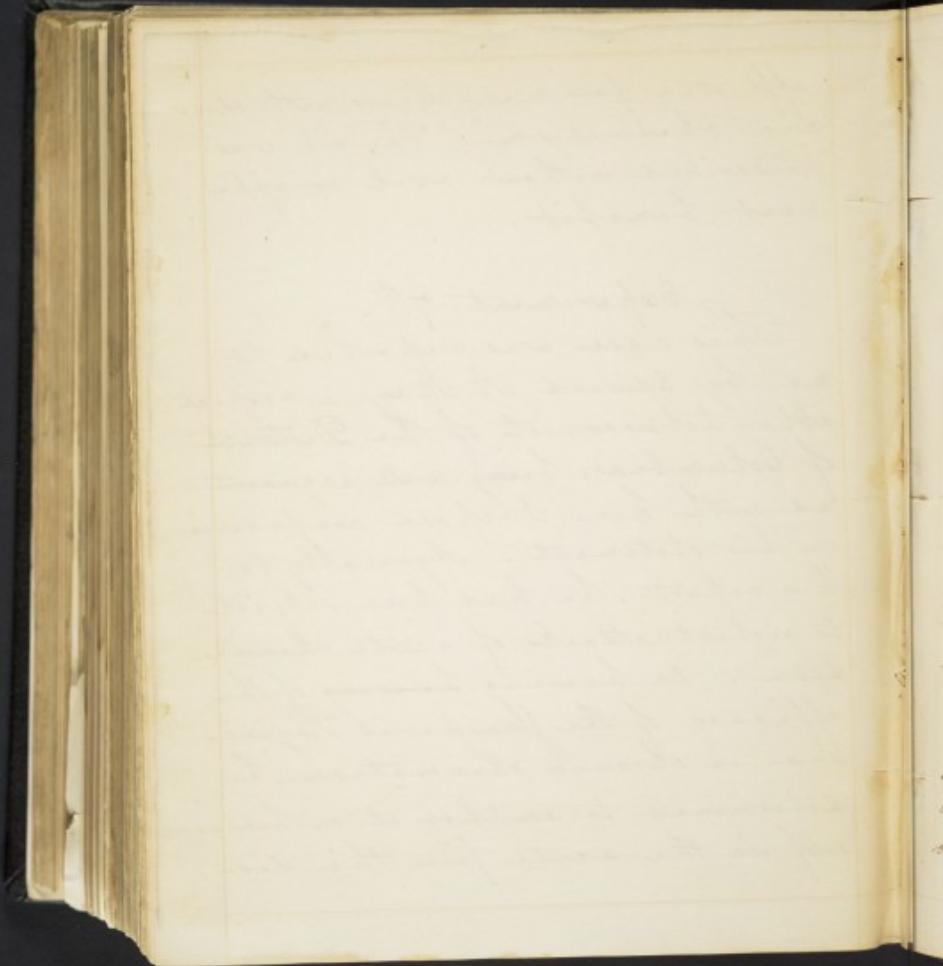
James Baker, about 60 years of age.  
In this case the patient had been



afflicted for many years with chronic rheumatism. The oil was prescribed without real or apparent benefit.

### Experiment 8<sup>th</sup>.

This case was reported to me by Edward A. May, a respectable tobacconist of the District of Columbia; being well acquainted with him, I possess confidence in his statement. Agreeably to his report, he had been subject to violent attacks of acute rheumatism. On hearing of the efficacy of the Juniperus Virginiana, in chronic rheumatism, he determined to employ it on himself in the acute form the dis-



case. He had been confined to his bed several weeks, with much swelling about his joints, his fever high, and pain considerable. — By the use of the oil, he was quickly relieved.

### Experiment 8<sup>th</sup>.

The *Juniperus Virginiana* was employed by Mr May with the same beneficial result in a subsequent attack of acute rheumatism. He had been confined to his bed about a week, his pain acute, and the weight of the sheet, on the parts inflamed, was the cause of much uneasiness.

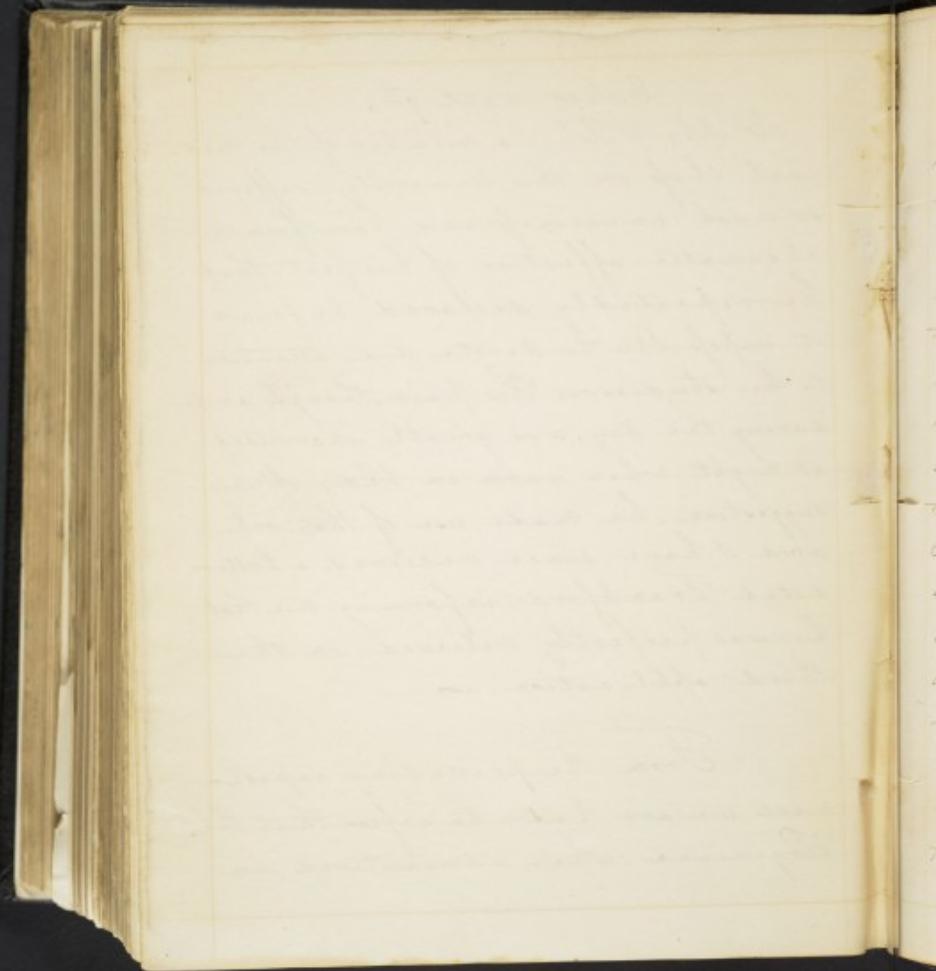
Contrary to the advice of his physician, he made use of the oil, in the form ofunction, and on the next day, he was enabled to walk.



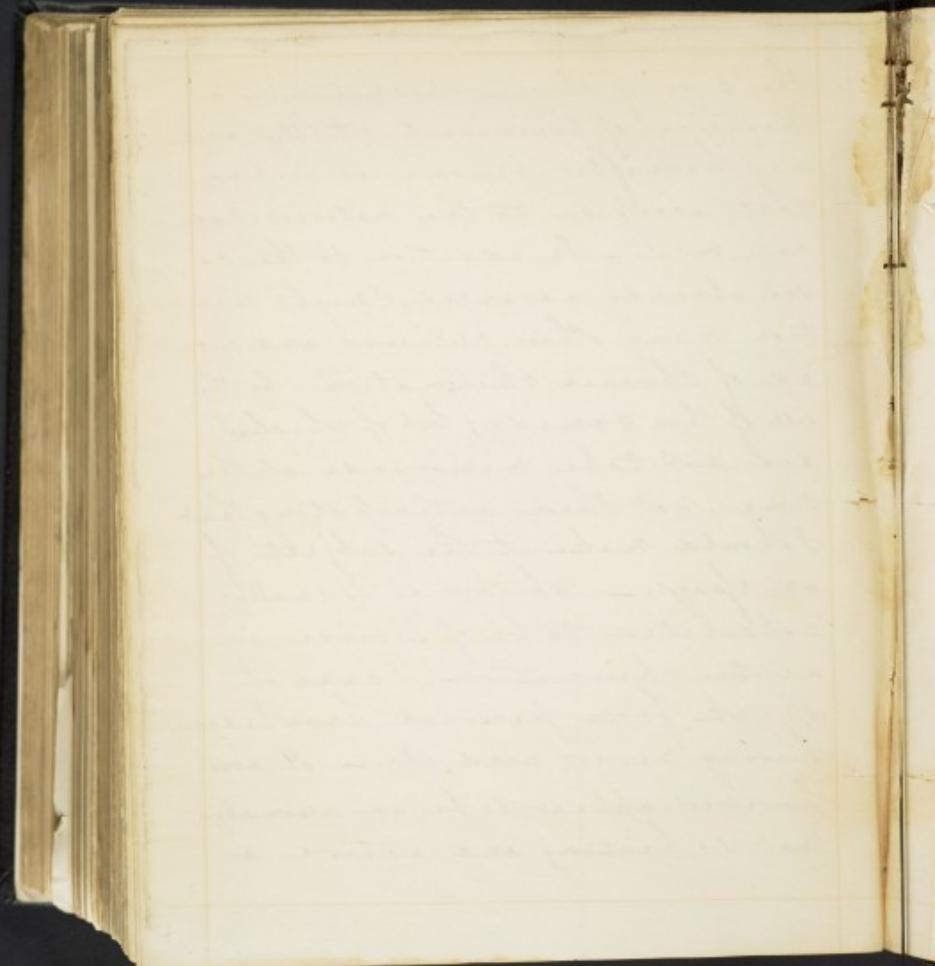
Experiment 9<sup>th</sup>.

Mr John Welsh, a member of the medical class in this University, suffered so much uneasiness and pain from a rheumatic affection of his feet, that he repeatedly declared he found it impossible to devote due attention to his studies. His pain, though acute during the day, was greatly increased at night when warm in bed. At my suggestion, he made use of the oil, and I have since received a letter dated Frankford, informing me that he was perfectly relieved on the third application.

From the preceding experiments we are led to infer that the Virginiana, when administered in



the cure of chronic rheumatism, is a  
medicine of prominent utility, and  
may hereafter become an import-  
ant accession to the Materia Medi-  
ca. — In addition to the ca-  
ses already advanced, I might men-  
tion many others, relieved and cur-  
ed of Chronic rheumatism, by the  
use of this remedy; but of which, I  
did not take memoranda at the  
time, not then anticipating that  
I should make it the subject of  
an essay. — Whether it is really  
calculated to be of service in  
acute rheumatism, I cannot  
speak from personal knowledge,  
having never used it. — It does,  
however, appear to be an anomaly  
that so heating and active a



stimulant, should be salutary, in  
the inflammatory form of this disease,  
but on this head, we are compelled  
to acknowledge that there are ma-  
ny fallacies in our opinions and  
theories. That the Balsom Copal-  
va may be prescriptive in the inflam-  
matory stage of gonorrhœa, Profes-  
sor Chapman has long since taught  
us, and we all know, that the Gum  
tree-birth is the most acrid, per-  
haps of all irritants, will allay the  
heat, soothe the pain, and arrest  
and subdue the inflammation of a  
burn. Other apparent anomie-  
ties might be mentioned, but  
it is unnecessary to dwell on  
them, before such learned  
and experienced judges. ~

